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THE COGNITIVE ENVIRONMENTS OF URBAN PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN. MANUAL OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING AND SCORING EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDE SURVEY.

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THIS MANUAL DESCRIBES MEASURES USED IN "THE COGNITIVE ENVIRONMENTS OF URBAN PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN" PROJECT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO. THE SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY CONSISTED OF 163 NEGRO MOTHER-CHILD PAIRS SELECTED FROM 3 SOCIOECONOMIC CLASSES BASED ON THE FATHER'S OCCUPATION AND THE PARENTS' EDUCATION. A FOURTH GROUP INCLUDED FATHER-ABSENT FAMILIES. THE MOTHERS WERE INTERVIEWED AT HOME AND THE MOTHERS AND CHILDREN WERE TESTED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO WHEN THE CHILDREN WERE 4 YEARS OLD. FOLLOW-UP DATA WERE OBTAINED WHEN THE CHILDREN WERE 6 AND AGAIN WHEN THEY WERE 7. THE EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDE SURVEY IS A SET OF 27 STATEMENTS TO WHICH THE MOTHERS WERE ASKED TO RESPOND ON A 5-POINT AGREEMENT-DISAGREEMENT SCALE. THE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MOTHERS ARE GIVEN IN THE MANUAL, AS ARE THE 27 STATEMENTS. PRINCIPAL COMPONENT FACTOR ANALYSIS OF THE 27 STATEMENTS GAVE 6 FACTORS WHICH WERE LABELED FOR THE MAIN THEME EXPRESSED BY THE FACTORS--(1) FUTILITY, (2) CONSERVATISM, (3) RESIGNATION, (4) IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION, (5) DE-EMPHASIS OF EDUCATION, AND (6) GRIPES. THE SCORING ON THE FACTORS WAS ADJUSTED SO THAT A LOW SCORE INDICATED AGREEMENT WITH THE THEME OF THE FACTOR CLUSTER. THIS IS PART OF THE HOME INTERVIEW DESCRIBED IN PS 000 475. (DR)

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# THE COGNITIVE ENVIRONMENTS OF URBAN PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

Robert D. Hess, Principal Investigator

## MANUAL OF INSTRUCTIONS

## FOR ADMINISTERING AND SCORING

## EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDE SURVEY

The measures described in this manual were developed in the project, Cognitive Environments of Urban Pre-School Children, supported by: Research Grant #R-34 from the Children's Bureau, Social Security Administration, and the Early Education Research Center, National Laboratory in Early Education, Office of Education, both of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; the Division of Research, Project Head Start, U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity; the Ford Foundation Fund for the Advancement of Learning; and grants-in-aid from the Social Science Research Committee of the Division of Social Sciences, University of Chicago.

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# THE COGNITIVE ENVIRONMENTS OF URBAN PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

The research sample for the Cognitive Environment Study was composed of 163 pairs of Negro mothers and their four-year-old children, from three socioeconomic classes, defined by father's occupation and parents' education: upper-middle, professional and executive, with college education; upper-lower, skilled and blue collar, with high school education; lower-lower, semiskilled and unskilled, with no greater than tenth-grade education; a fourth group included father-absent families living on public assistance, otherwise identical to the lower-lower class group.

Subjects were interviewed in the home, and mothers and children were brought to the University of Chicago campus for testing, when the children were four years old. Follow-up data were obtained from both mother and child when the child was six years of age, and again at seven years.

Principal Investigator for the project is Professor Robert D. Hess, formerly Director, Urban Child Center, University of Chicago, now Lee Jacks Professor of Child Education, School of Education, Stanford University.

Co-Investigator for the follow-up study is Dr. Virginia C. Shipman, Research Associate (Associate Professor) and Lecturer, Committee on Human Development, and Director, Project Head Start Evaluation and Research Center, University of Chicago, who served as Project Director for the pre-school phase of the research.

Dr. Jere Edward Brophy, Research Associate (Assistant Professor), Committee on Human Development, University of Chicago, was Project Director for the follow-up study and participated as a member of the research staff of the pre-school study.

Dr. Roberta Meyer Bear, Research Associate (Assistant Professor), Committee on Human Development, University of Chicago, participated as a member of the research staff during the pre-school and follow-up phases of the project and was in charge of the manuscript preparation during the write-up phase of the research.

Other staff members who contributed greatly to the project include Dr. Ellis Olim, (University of Massachusetts, Amherst) who was responsible for the major analysis of maternal language; Dr. David Jackson, (Toronto, Ontario) who was involved in early stages of development of categories for the analysis of mother-child interaction, and participated in the processing and analysis of data; Mrs. Dorothy Runner, who supervised the training and work of the home interviewers, acted as a liason with public agencies, and had primary responsibility for obtaining the sample of subjects; and Mrs. Susan Beal, computer programmer.

COGNITIVE ENVIRONMENT STUDY

EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDE SURVEY MANUAL

SUMMER 1967

## INTRODUCTION

During the home interview, mothers were administered the Educational Attitude Survey, a 27-item instrument designed to measure attitudes toward education and toward the public school system. The series of 27 statements were read to the mother, and she was asked to indicate whether she agreed or disagreed, on a five-point scale: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = don't know; 4 = disagree; 5 = strongly disagree.

Specific instructions to the respondent were:

NO ONE YOU KNOW WILL SEE THE ANSWERS YOU GIVE TO THESE QUESTIONS. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. AS A PARENT YOU HAVE IMPORTANT OPINIONS ABOUT THE SCHOOL THAT WE DO NOT KNOW ABOUT. YOU WOULD BE HELPING US A LOT IF YOU WOULD TELL US WHAT THEY ARE. YOU MAY FIND SOME OF THE STATEMENTS HARD TO ANSWER BECAUSE THEY SEEM SO GENERAL, BUT PLEASE TRY TO ANYWAY.

A sample item was given, with emphasis on the use of the 5-point scale in responding. Then mothers were told:

PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS AS THEY WOULD APPLY TO THE (CITY) PUBLIC SCHOOLS AS YOU KNOW THEM.

Mothers were encouraged to respond to all items, and were discouraged from using the neutral, "Don't know" response except where absolutely necessary.

## THE ITEMS

1. The teachers expect the children always to obey them.

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2. The only way that poor people can raise the way they live is to get a good education.

3. Most teachers probably like quiet children better than active ones.

4. The best way to improve the schools is to integrate them.

5. I can do very little to improve the schools.

6. The classrooms are overcrowded.

7. What they teach the kids is out-of-date.

8. Most teachers do not want to be bothered by parents coming to see them.

9. Sports and games take up too much time.

10. Kids cut up so much that teachers can't teach.

11. Not enough time is spent learning reading, writing, and arithmetic.

12. There are some children in the school I would not want my child to play with.

13. People who don't have much education enjoy life just as much as well educated people.

14. The law should be changed so that boys and girls would have to stay in school until they completed high school.

15. In school there are more important things than getting good grades.

16. The best way to improve the schools is to train teachers better.

17. Once in a while it should be OK for parents to keep their children out of school to help out at home.

18. Teachers who are very friendly are not able to control the children.

19. The teachers make the children doubt and question things that they are told at home.

20. Most teachers would be good examples for my children.

21. When children do not work hard in school, the parents are to blame.

22. The most important quality of a real man is driving purpose to get ahead.

23. Most kids who can do the work are able to get to college if they really want to.

24. A man can often learn more on a job than he can in school.

25. Most children have to be made to learn.

26. If I disagree with the principal, there is very little I can do.

27. Most of the teachers are not trained as well as they should be.

Additional information obtained from each respondent included basic items; age, sex, education, and occupation; plus the following pertinent items:

1. Do you have children in school?

2. Do you plan to send (4-year-old child) to:

a) (city) public school
b) religious school
c) a private school other than religious
d) other
e) don't know

## EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDE FACTOR SCORES

Principal component factor analyses were done using the 27 items in the Educational Attitude Survey. An initial analysis, limiting the number of factor clusters to eight, and a second analysis limiting the number to six, produced essentially the same six factors. Each of the 27 items had a high loading on one and only one of the six factors, and each factor had three to six high-loading items. The six factors and tentative labels for the major theme expressed by them are:

FACTOR ONE ("futility", "felt lack of effectiveness")
- #25 - Most children have to be made to learn. (.719)
- #26 - If I disagree with the principal, there is very little I can do. (.713)
- #05 - I can do very little to improve the schools. (.694)
- #10 - Kids cut up so much that teachers can't teach. (.545)
- #03 - Most teachers probably like quiet children better than active ones. (.482)

FACTOR TWO ("conservatism")
- #8 - Most teachers do not want to be bothered by parents coming to see them.(.667)
- #11 - Not enough time is spent learning the 3 R's. (.658)
- #07 - What they teach the kids is out-of-date. (.654)
- #09 - Sports and games take up too much time. (.574)
- #18 - Teachers who are very friendly are not able to control the children. (.521)

FACTOR THREE ("resignation")
- #23 - Most kids who can do the work are able to get to college if they really want to. (-.645)
- #22 - The most important quality of a real man is driving purpose to get ahead. (-.606)
- #16 - The best way to improve the schools is to train the teachers better. (-.493)
- #14 - The law should be changed so that boys and girls would have to stay in school until they completed high school. (-.456)
- #21 - When children do not work hard in school, the parents are to blame. (-.419)
- #02 - The only way that poor people can raise the way they live is to get a good education. (-.368)

FACTOR FOUR ("importance of education")
- #04 - The best way to improve the schools is to integrate them. (.575)
- #20 - Most teachers would be a good example for my children. (.530)
- #24 - A man can often learn more on a job than he can in school. (-.615)
- #27 - Most of the teachers are not trained as well as they should be. (-.451)

FACTOR FIVE ("de-emphasis of education")

#15 - In school there are more important things than getting good grades. (.697)

#13 - People who don't have much education enjoy life just as much as well educated people. (.591)

#19 - The teachers make the children doubt and question things that they are told at home. (.523)

FACTOR SIX ("gripes")

#06 - The classrooms are overcrowded. (-.701)

#12 - There are children in the school I would not want my child to play with (-.404)

#01 - The teachers expect the children always to obey them. (-.398)

#17 - Once in a while it should be okay for parents to keep their children out of school to help out at home. (.397)

## EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDE SCORES

From the six factor clusters obtained in principal component factor analyses of the 27 Educational Attitude Survey items, six Educational Attitude Scores were computed by summing the raw scores (1 to 5) on the items comprising each factor. In two cases, where high negative and high positive loadings both occurred among the items, "reverse" scores were used to obtain the Attitude Scores, as noted below for factors four and six. Since the raw scores are scale points from 1 = strongly agree through 5 = strongly disagree, those items which loaded in an opposite direction to the majority of items comprising the factor, were calculated in the total Attitude Score as though the response-scale were reversed: 1 = strongly disagree (formerly 5); 2 = disagree (old 4); 3 = don't know (unchanged); 4 = agree (old 2); 5 = strongly agree (old 1).

The Educational Attitude Scores were obtained and tentatively labeled in such manner that low scores represent greater agreement with the central theme of the factor cluster.

To obtain Educational Attitude Score One, "futility" or "felt lack of effectiveness", EAS items 3, 5, 10, 25, and 26 were summed.

To obtain Education Attitude Score Two, "conservatism", EAS items 7, 8, 9, 11, and 18 were summed.

To obtain Educational Attitude Score Three, "resignation", EAS items 2, 14, 16, 21, 22, and 23 were summed.

To obtain Educational Attitude Score Four, "importance of education", EAS items 4 and 20, and "reverse" scores for EAS items 24 and 27, were summed.

To obtain Educational Attitude Score Five, "de-emphasis of education", EAS items 13, 15, and 19 were summed.

To obtain Educational Attitude Score Six, "gripes", EAS items 1, 6, 12 and the "reverse" score for item 17, were summed.